

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 VO-03 H-02 SCCT-01 SY-05

ORM-01 DHA-02 SCA-01 FBIE-00 INSE-00 NSC-05 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /072 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/INS:JNACH:MMK

APPROVED BY NEA/INS:DKUX

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AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 246702

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: IN, NP, US, CVIS, PINT

SUBJECT: ANANDA MARG

1. U. S. ANANDA MARG OFFICIAL TOM BAREFOOT CONTACTED US OCT. 14 FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM NEPAL AND EUROPE. DEPARTMENT OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED BAREFOOT THAT WE ARE WARNING AMERICAN MARGIS NOT TO TRAVEL TO OR TRANSIT INDIA AS THEY MAY BE SUBJECT TO ARREST IN VIEW OF GOI ATTITUDE. BAREFOOT AGREED WITH THIS ADVICE AND RECOUNTED EPISODE DURING HIS RECENT NEPAL VISIT WHEN HE HAD ATTEMPTED TO VISIT PATNA TO CHECK ON STATUS OF IMPRISONED ;ARG FOUNDER P.R. SARKAR. HE SAID THAT HE WAS DETAINED AND QUESTIONED-- AND, AT ONE POINT, BRIEFLY THREATENED WITH JAIL--FOR SEVERAL HOURS BY INDIAN IMMIGRATION POLICE AT RAXAUL BORDER POST BEFORE BEING REFUSED ENTRY.

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2. ACCORDING BAREFOOT, TWO MEN, RICHARD WHITE AND ANDRE COLBERT, BOTH BELIEVED TO BE AUSTRALIANS, WERE RECENTLY ARRESTED IN CALCUTTA AND CHARGED UNDER THE DEFENSE OF INDIA RULES WITH "AIDING IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A 3ANNED ORGANIZATION" AND "SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES". BAREFOOT CLAIMED THAT COLBERT WAS WAITING IN CALCUTTA TO PICK UP AIR TICKETS FOR HIS RETURN TO AUSTRALIA WHILE WHITE WAS ON A SHORT VISIT TO CALCUTTA BEFORE RETURNING TO NEPAL.

3. BAREFOOT SAID THAT UP TO 30 ADDITIONAL MARG MINISTERS MIGHT APPLY FOR VISAS AS "MINISTERS" OF RELIGION DURING THE NEXT 6-8 MONTHS. OF THE TOTAL, THREE ARE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES (THE PHILIPPINES, ARGENTINA, AND GERMANY) AND THE REMAINDER STILL IN INDIA. BAREFOOT DID NOT KNOW HOW MANY OF THOSE NOW IN INDIA WOULD SUCCEED IN FILTERING INTO NEPAL. HOWEVER, NOT RPT NOT ALL FUTURE MARG MINISTERS MAY BE APPLYING FOR U.S. VISAS; BAREFOOT SAID THAT SWEDEN HAS ALREADY GRANTED ASYLUM TO ONE MARG CLERGYMAN AND MAY DO SO FOR OTHERS.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE MURDER TRIAL OF SARKAR, BAREFOOT SAID THAT IT BEGAN DURING THE SEPTEMBER PATNA FLOOD; WITH THE GOI SEEKING TO MINIMIZE PUBLICITY. BAREFOOT ASSERTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS SOUGHT TO DISQUALIFY SARKAR'S LAWYERS ON GROUNDS THAT THEIR FEES WERE COMING FROM A BANNED ORGANIZATION. THE TRIAL, NOW IN RECESS, IS REPORTEDLY SLATED TO RESUME NOVEMBER 22. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RELIGIOUS GROUPS, TRAVEL CONTROLS, IMMIGRANT VISAS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE246702
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JNACH:MMK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750360-1079
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751046/aaaabpgf.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <10 Jun 2003 by MorefiRH, INA>; RELEASED <08 JUL 2003 by MorefiRH>; RELEASED <08 Jul 2003 by MorefiRH>; APPROVED <05 JAN 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ANANDA MARG
TAGS: CVIS, PINT, IN, NP, US, ANANDA MARG
To: NEW DELHI KATHMANDU
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006